Crushing Multiple Choice Questions

Avoiding Traps and Reaching the Best Answer
Presented By the Academic Support and Bar Services Department

- Professor Marguerite Lee
- Assistant Director of Bar Services
- marlee@ggu.edu
- Room 3313
- Slides and workshops on website
First: Know the Law

- For multiple choice, you need to know the law in detail—Master the Law
- Know the General Rules, Exceptions, and Defenses
- Know where the issue/law fits in the big picture of that subject
Second: Reading Comprehension

- Be aware of time per question, usually 2 and one half minutes per question.

- Read the questions carefully: don’t skim or ignore facts or assume facts, don’t rush, FINISH THE TEST.

- Underline key words.

- Make a diagram or flowchart as you read the question.

- You should read the answer choices carefully: don’t anticipate the right answer, consider every option, give reasons for why an answer choice is wrong, eliminate two choices, one is correct based on facts and call of question.
Third: Get your answer choices down to two

- Based on your knowledge of the law, the wording of the question, and the wording of the answer choices, get down to two choices

- Then pick the answer that is THE BEST answer based on the law, the question, and the wording of the answer choice

- Trust yourself – avoid second-guessing
Fourth: Practice with Purpose

- Get past sample multiple choice questions from your professor, Themis materials or other resources, or from the library: practice open outline, untimed, write applicable law next to answer choices

- Weeks 14-16: practice closed outline and timed.
Fifth: self evaluation

- Did you read the questions and answer choices correctly?
- If not, slow down, and see what word or words you missed
- Did you know the law being applied?
- If not, look up the law, and learn the rule
Sixth: Remember

- Put the law and facts that you want to remember from your practice multiple choice questions into your outline
MCQs are Similar to Essays
Remember IRAC

1. Facts are given for both
2. Essays: spot issue, MCQ: spot issue or given
3. Essays: state applicable rule, MCQ: you supply applicable rule
4. Essay: analyze, MCQ: do option analysis and conclude
5. Essay: write a conclusion
Practice with a Purpose

- Eliminate choices that apply a rule not at issue
- Eliminate choices that misstate a rule
- Eliminate an answer that misstates or assumes facts
- Eliminate a choice that considers something irrelevant
- Eliminate a choice with a rule you have never heard of
Top Reasons for Wrong Answers on the MCQs

1. Lack of mastery of the law

2. Making a technique error/falling for a detractor
More Information

- [http://law.ggu.edu/student-support/academic-resources/academic-development-program/](http://law.ggu.edu/student-support/academic-resources/academic-development-program/)

- Next Workshop is:
  - Week 12: Answering the Question “Why”: Legal Analysis on Law School Exams
  - LSN: Wednesday, Nov. 2, 5:15-6:15, room 2203